

of the great tusks, with some of the marl in which they were imbedded.

You will consider this as a mere sketch, intended to give a general idea of the condition of the two most perfect specimens of *Mastodon giganteus*. At a future period I shall endeavour to give a more detailed account of them, accompanied by the best representations I am able to procure. As my object is the promotion of science, and as the one in my possession is unquestionably the most perfect, if not the largest known specimen of *Mastodon giganteus*, I shall be quite ready to answer any inquiries which you or other scientific gentlemen may propose. I shall also be glad to exhibit the skeleton to any such gentlemen who happening to be in this country may have a desire to examine it. The other skeleton will also, I apprehend, be placed in a situation where it can be examined by those interested in comparative anatomy and palæontology.

I remain, my dear Sir, with great respect, your friend, &c.,

JOHN C. WARREN.

*Professor Owen, Royal College of Surgeons, London.*

XXII.—*Notice of a Bottle-nosed Whale, Hyperoodon Butzkopf, Lacep., obtained in Belfast Bay in October 1845.* By WILLIAM THOMPSON, President Nat. Hist. and Philosophical Society of Belfast.

[With a Plate.]

IN a paper published in the 'Annals' for February 1840 (vol. iv. p. 375) I noticed seven Hyperoodons—the first of which had previously been most fully described by Dr. Jacob of Dublin—as having been obtained on a limited portion of the coast of Ireland, comprised in less than the northern half of the eastern line of coast, or merely from the bay of Belfast to that of Dublin inclusive. An eighth—about 24 feet in length—examined by Dr. G. J. Allman, was obtained at the island of Ireland's Eye, on the Dublin coast, on the 30th of October 1842. I have now to record the occurrence of a ninth individual procured within the same range of coast. Its capture was thus noticed in one of the Belfast newspapers—the Banner of Ulster—on Friday Oct. 31, 1845 :—

“*A Whale in Belfast Lough.*—On the morning of Wednesday last [29th Oct. 1845] the services of the Coast Guard stationed at Cultra Point were called into active requisition by the appearance of—not a smuggler—but something ‘very like a whale,’ ploughing the waters a few hundred yards from the pier. \* \* \*

Without loss of time a boat was manned by four or five of the Coast Guard armed with harpoon, cutlass, carbine and hatchet, resolved to make the stranger pay dearly for his visit. \* \* \* After a good deal of manœuvring the men succeeded in bringing their boat alongside the enemy, and then commenced their assault upon him without mercy \* \* \* and after a little show of opposition he attempted to make off, but his endeavours were fruitless. After receiving two or three shots, and a good many strokes with the harpoon, a grappling-iron was thrown over him and the boat was rowed shorewards amid the huzzas of the spectators, with the poor whale vanquished and weltering in his blood, which dyed the waters, and soon the retreating tide left him high and dry upon the beach. \* \* \* It exhibited great tenacity of life, having survived six hours after being brought to land, though cut and hacked in an extreme degree. \* \* \* On Wednesday and yesterday crowds of persons flocked from this town and other places to see it where it lies on the shore at Cultra.”

I was absent from home at the time, but my friend Mr. James Bryce, F.G.S., ever active and energetic, hastened to the beach where the animal was lying, took the measurements of it in detail, and subsequently repeated them under more favourable circumstances in the yard in the town of Belfast, to which the animal was brought for exhibition, and where it attracted a large number of visitors for several days. Mr. Bryce had at this time careful drawings made of the *Hyperoodon* by his relative Mr. R. Young, which, together with his own notes, have been kindly placed in my hands. I happened to return home just in time to see the animal before it was cut up on the 8th of November. It is a male. Mr. Bryce's description is as follows:—

	ft.	in.
“ Length, measured in a straight line from snout to tail.....	20	4
———, measured along the dorsal curve .....	23	4
Height, greatest .....	4	6
Girth, greatest.....	11	6
Breadth of forehead .....	3	0
Length of rostrum or snout .....	0	11
——— of mouth to rictus .....	1	7
Depth of each jaw at point .....	0	4
Eye from point of snout .....	3	1
Blow-hole from point of snout (following dorsal profile) .....	3	9
———, in length (slightly crescentic points directed towards the head: it and the eyes in the same vertical plane)..... }	0	6
Pectoral fins from base of snout .....	5	0
——— fins, space between them .....	1	7
——— fins in length, from base at upper side to point .....	2	2
——— fins in breadth .....	0	7
Dorsal fin distant from caudal fin, estimated from a straight line drawn from snout to tail .....	8	0
Dorsal fin, length at base .....	1	7
——— fin in height (points backward) .....	1	0

	ft.	in.
Caudal fin, greatest length .....	1	11
——— fin, greatest breadth .....	5	6
——— fin, greatest thickness .....	0	3
Aperture anterior to vent in length .....	1	0
——— of vent in length .....	0	6

“The marking at each side from behind the lip, extending under the chin in the direction of the belly, is fourteen inches in length; in breadth it is two inches anteriorly and nine inches posteriorly\*. *Colour* when quite recent of a blackish lead hue, and the skin, which was exquisitely thin, beautifully polished like patent-leather, and more especially so on the tail and caudal fin: it was merely of a lighter shade beneath and not white. No teeth visible.”

Although no teeth could be seen when the animal was entire, the removal of the fleshy portion of the lower jaw exposed four of them towards its extremity. They are loose in their sockets, and so deeply sunk in the groove as not to be apparent above the bone when the jaw is viewed in profile. Though loose, the two front teeth may be stated as  $7\frac{1}{2}$  lines from the extremity of the jaw, and the hinder pair as 9 lines distant from them. The accompanying sketch (Pl. IV. fig. 1) which I made of them, represents the teeth and jaw of natural size. So much has already been written on the teeth of this species, that I shall content myself with merely calling attention to the very small size of the anterior pair in the present individual—a male upwards of twenty-three feet in length—compared with those represented in Owen’s ‘*Odontography*,’ pl. 88. fig. 1, although the *Hyperoodon* to which the latter belonged is said to have been immature, p. 347. The stomach of the Irish specimen was quite empty. It was believed that this animal, which was in the highest condition, would have been about five tons in weight; it produced above ninety gallons of oil: the entire skeleton has been preserved for the Belfast Museum.

Baussard’s figure of the *Hyperoodon* (as repeated in F. Cuvier’s ‘*Hist. Nat. Cetacés*,’ pl. 17. fig. 1) would with some corrections represent this specimen; but it has seemed to me desirable to have an outline of it engraved from the drawing already alluded to, *zoologically* corrected by myself (Pl. IV. fig. 2). The difference between Baussard’s and the Irish specimen will be seen to consist in the latter being less elongate; in its dorsal fin being smaller, and placed considerably farther back; in its eye being round instead of oval like the human eye, and in its being defi-

\* These are evidently the same as the “two diverging furrows” described as “under the throat” in the *Physeter bidens* of Sowerby; they were said in the Irish specimen under consideration to have resembled the healed-up deep wounds in the stem of a large tree.



cient in the ornament of eyebrows; also, in the spiracle being placed in the same vertical plane with the eye.

In my paper before alluded to (p. 379), a simultaneous movement or migration of Hyperoodons to the Irish Sea is recorded to have taken place in the autumn of 1839, not more than two however appearing in company. In connection with this fact, I have on the present occasion only to notice the autumnal appearance of the species in another year, and the occurrence of three individuals on the same day, though in localities widely separated, the one being taken in Belfast Bay and the others in the Firth of Forth. Just as I reached Edinburgh on the 31st of October, and was conversing with Dr. P. Neill—who had likewise borne his part in describing British whales—the body of an *Hyperoodon* to our astonishment appeared in view, and as we learned, was about to be taken to the Zoological Garden, and exposed to the atmosphere during winter. The blubber and soft parts had previously been removed, the latter having been anatomically examined by Mr. John Goodsir, and “preparations” of them made for the University Museum, where the skeleton itself will eventually be placed. This is said to be the first known occurrence of the species on the eastern coast of Scotland. From the gentleman just named, and Mr. Melville, his most able assistant in the Museum of Comparative Anatomy, &c. in Edinburgh University, I have learned that this whale, killed in the Firth of Forth on the 29th of October, “measured  $28\frac{1}{2}$  feet in a line from the tip of the snout to the middle of the caudal fin, not following the curvature, but as if a plumb-line were dropped from one point to the other. It was a female, and was accompanied by a young female (nine feet long measured in the same way) which was still sucking: the mammae of the mother were distended with milk which appeared very rich in butter, and tasted pleasantly.” Mr. Melville adds, that he “forgot to ascertain the point at which the triangular process of skin under the throat commenced posteriorly, but anteriorly it reached to the middle of the lower jaw: the large teeth were not visible, being hid under the gum in both.” We have another instance of a mother and her young being taken, in those described by Baussard as stranded at Honfleur. I am not aware of the occurrence of any of these whales upon our coasts in the autumn or winter just passed, excepting the three noticed in this communication.